

PROTECTION

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*"The 'still, small voice' of scientific thought reaches
over continent and ocean to the globe's remotest bound.
The inaudible voice of Truth is, to the human mind,
'as when a lion roareth.'"*

— Mary Baker Eddy

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SAFETY

The ninety-first psalm has been for centuries the refuge of the Christian in the hour of trouble. If you were to ask him the reason for this, he would probably founder in his analysis. He might tell you that it was God's message to humanity in their affliction, that it was instinct with divine protection, and a hundred other things. Yet, being at sea in the midst of a submarine zone, or on shore, amidst the shell craters of "No-man's-land," he would probably rather trust to the protection of a destroyer, in the first instance, or to a covering barrage, in the second. He would explain this, quite naturally and quite genuinely, by saying that God has given the race its intelligence with which to safeguard itself, and that the destroyer and the barrage constitute the manifestation of this intelligence. Nevertheless he knows such reasoning to be faulty, and, if pressed, will retire to a frank declaration of faith in something he can neither explain nor understand. For, indeed, the writer of that psalm never advised his readers to rely on material ingenuity, but, on the contrary, to dwell in the secret place of the Most High, with the result that, "a thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand; but it shall not come nigh thee."

It is tolerably obvious, then, that if the protection of the secret place is to be made practically available to-day to those who go down to the sea in ships, or who jeopard their lives in battle, it must be through some surer protection than the blind faith urged on humanity by St. Gregory, as the only faith which is faith. The writer of the psalm certainly meant something by his words, and that something was translated by Jesus the Christ and his immediate followers into language less archaic than the cadences of the poet, and more scientific than the imagery of the prophet, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free;" and again, "Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works." Such language, surely, puts an end to vain argument. Knowledge is not guesswork or even a blind acceptance of other people's experience. It is the outcome of personally demonstrated experience.

A man may have faith in the acceptance of a premise which he has

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assured himself is theoretically sound, but he has most certainly no knowledge of the truth of his theory until he has demonstrated that truth, or, as James says, proved his faith in it by works. Then his faith has passed into knowledge, and, as the proofs of the truth of his theory accumulate, this knowledge becomes exact or scientific. This is the full, exact, and so scientific knowledge of God, of the Christ, and of Truth, which the writers of the New Testament are repeatedly urging upon their readers, a knowledge so scientific and so exacting that, as Paul plainly warned the church in Rome, sensuality and materiality revolt against it, finding a positive relief in animality, and accepting as true those physical phenomena whose sole claim to recognition is that they are counterfeits of or lies about the true creations of Spirit, since, as Paul writes, "the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made," which is as much as to say that the only true thing that can be said about a lie is the fact that there is a truth to lie about.

Paul, indeed, put the same colossal truth even more simply and directly to the Hebrews than to the Romans, for, as he wrote in that famous letter, "through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." The man, then, standing on the deck of a steamer watching the wake of a torpedo, or almost stunned by the roar of the guns tearing craters in "No-man's-land," has not got to find safety in the guns of a destroyer or the cavity of a dugout. He has only to realize exactly what Paul meant, namely, that the torpedo and the shell, although things that are seen by the human vision, did not originate in things apparent to the human senses, but are simply misconceptions, formed by the human mind of spiritual realities. When this is done, the thinker finds that he has taken refuge in the secret place of the Most High, in that knowledge, in other words, of the absolute truth, which, Jesus declared, frees men from the ignorance of their material beliefs.

What this all amounts to is the gospel teaching of the unreality of matter. This, of course, is a vast subject in itself. But it may be understood or rather comprehensively stated in these declarations of Jesus himself, of Peter, of James, and of Paul. Mrs. Eddy accepted them as the basis, in Science and Health, of her teaching of the healing of sickness. Paul had explained that things were not what they seemed, that the evidence of the

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senses was untrustworthy, since physical phenomena did not, in the least, originate in matter, that is, in "the things which do appear." In precisely the same way, Mrs. Eddy, writing on pages 476 and 477 of Science and Health of what are termed the miracles of Jesus, says, "Jesus beheld in Science the perfect man, who appeared to him where sinning mortal man appears to mortals. In this perfect man the Saviour saw God's own likeness, and this correct view of man healed the sick."

Now, in destroying an unreal mental phenomenon, there is no difference whether it be a torpedo in the Atlantic, a shell in "No-man's-land," a wound in a dressing station, or a fever in a base hospital. You do not turn aside a torpedo or a shell in flight, or a bayonet thrust, any more than you will away fever. What you do is to realize that these things are "not made of things which do appear." You endeavor to grasp the fact that inasmuch as a lie cannot be about nothing, your torpedo, shell, bayonet, or fever must be lies about some truth, which, when you know it, frees you from the effect of the ignorance bred of the material concept. You see, as Mrs. Eddy says, the perfect Truth, and the lie disappears. It is not, necessarily, that the torpedo twists away from your ship, that the shell fails to explode, that the bayonet strikes another object, or that the fever epidemic suddenly abates. It is that in gaining a true concept of substance these things necessarily cease to be. You do not discover a spiritual torpedo, a heavenly shell, a godlike bayonet, or a Christly fever, but you do discover that these material phenomena are all counterfeits of spiritual reflections of Principle or lies about ideas in divine Mind. It is not that there is any spiritual object corresponding exactly to a torpedo, a shell, a bayonet, or a fever: it is that divine Mind contains no idea, and Principle casts no reflection, that is not spiritual and harmonious. For as Mrs. Eddy writes on page 310 of Science and Health, "Thought will finally be understood and seen in all form, substance, and color, but without material accompaniments." When once you have grasped that metaphysically, and attuned your life to your precept, you will find how utterly impossible it is that the false concept or lie, whether in the shape of torpedo, shell, bayonet, or fever, should ever come nigh thee.

Frederick Dixon.

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DIVINE PRESERVATION

A message of good cheer for the active and prospective soldier is to be found in the seventeenth chapter of I Samuel. Therein is contained an account of the power of God's law of preservation during time of war, and the truth in the narrative illumined by the light of Christian Science becomes a veritable shield for the modern warrior. We are told that the Israelites and the Philistines had been in battle array for forty days without a decisive victory. Twice daily Goliath had successfully defied the hosts of Israel by mesmerizing them into believing that he was invincible, and his display of preparedness, size, and power had paralyzed them into allowing his boast to go unchallenged.

Now in the near-by country was a farmer lad minding his sheep, whose father sent him on an errand to his brethren at the front. The account reads that his mission carried him into the very front trench just as the Jewish soldiers were essaying to attack the Philistines, but they were again repulsed by Goliath's appearance. David, perceiving the need of the Jewish army to be released from the bondage of fear, volunteered to enter the service for this purpose. When it seemed likely that he would be rejected because of his youth and lack of military training he recounted a personal experience. Telling how, while keeping his sheep, a lion and a bear came to attack the flock and he slew them both, he concluded with the words: "The Lord that delivered me out of the paw of the lion, and out of the paw of the bear, he will deliver me out of the hand of this Philistine." David had already met and conquered the attack of death, therefore he knew the power of God's law to preserve man and was confident that it would operate on the battle field as perfectly as in the sheep field, for was it not an infinite, omnipresent, and omnipotent law?

Evil's presentation of itself as size, power, or frightfulness, whether in the guise of man or beast, held no terror for the shepherd lad because he knew that all power belonged to God and that spiritual understanding was the supreme might of deliverance. So great was his confidence in his God, the very God of Israel, that he was accepted for the service and permitted to go out alone to meet Goliath. Passing beyond the shelter of the trench into No-man's-land, he ran eagerly to meet the enemy. The boast of evil

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that in such daring he would be mutilated, disintegrated, and destroyed, came back upon its own head, for David returned from the encounter intact as well as victorious.

It is notable that the instrument through which wisdom accomplished Goliath's downfall was a little stone in the hand of a boy. How large was Goliath really, how powerful, how much to be feared when such a small missile understandingly wielded could meet his challenge? It is evident that it was not a giant but the mistaken belief in the power of a giant which had controlled both armies for so many days and prolonged the battle. The element which needed to be destroyed in order to liberate the hosts was the mesmerism wielded by a liar. The armies had not discovered this; military tactics had not revealed it; the situation was helpless, hopeless before it. But one man's spiritual understanding of the omnipotence of God and of the supreme ever presence and activity of His law of preservation for His creation instantly detected and overcame the trouble.

David was not a victim of the malicious suggestion exercised morning and evening by Goliath, the carnal mind, when it bragged of its domination; neither was he its dupe when as animality it displayed its great weight, size, and solidity. His divine insight enabled him to know just where to hit it, and the direct blow of true understanding aimed at error's forehead, or false claim of intelligence in matter, sufficed to win the battle. David did not hesitate or fear to go to war, to enter the trench, or to venture beyond, because he acknowledged no war zone from which God's law could be excluded or where it did not work. He knew and proved that the flock of Israel was as safe as the flock of sheep under the protection of the omnipotent Love which neither slumbers nor sleeps.

The Davids of to-day, they who know and do the will of God, need not fear to go forth to fight for the right. The wood and brass and iron of to-day's Goliath, though in the form of battleship, aeroplane, gun, and other human inventions, instead of greaves of brass, staff, and spear, have no more power now than then to protect error or to destroy God's man. Defiant evil is as weak as the might of the giant when it yielded to the stone from the brook.

Truly men's hearts may sing in eternal safety, for nothing can

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separate man from the love of God. They may divinely dare to venture forth with full assurance, having no uncertain sense of the issue but with David's calm trust in the ability of God to defend His man while destroying all evil. It was the psalmist warrior who sang from an understanding heart this song: "The Lord is my strength and my shield." This is reiterated by Mrs. Eddy on page 127 of "The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany," where in speaking of the Christian Science warriors' armament she says: "Ours is not costly as men count cost, but it is rich beyond price, staunch and indestructible on land or sea; it is not curtailed in peace, surrendered in conquest, nor laid down at the feet of progress through the hands of omnipotence. And why? Because it is 'on earth peace, good will toward men,' — a cover and a defence adapted to all men, all nations, all times, climes, and races."

Julia Warner Michael.

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INTRENCHMENT

In warfare one purpose of trenches is, of course, protection. The trenches of to-day, just as in the time of David, represent the best protection that the human mind has been able to devise in the circumstances. Since any human concept, however, is but a counterfeit of the perfect spiritual idea, Christian Science requires us to turn our attention to the truth about even intrenchment.

What is the one perfect protection? What is the true intrenchment which must be understood by all who would put on the whole armor of God? The one surety is simply that Life is indeed eternal. In the trenches to-day the soldiers themselves are getting glimpses of this fundamental fact and are willing, therefore, to turn more and more from a human sense of life to Principle. No one can give up immortality. Consciousness demonstrably is, and what really is always is, for it could not possibly include any element of nonexistence, any element of destruction. Infinite divine consciousness, which, in the last analysis, is all that provably exists, is God, in whom man lives and moves and has his being. Instead of living in a material body, man lives thus as the forever expression of indestructible consciousness. The sureness of this must take the place of any fear.

The only enemy of mankind is the supposition denying this metaphysical truth that the real man lives as the uninterruptedly active manifestation of perfect consciousness. Supposition of any opposite or denial of the one spiritual consciousness which is all there is, must be, however, mere supposition of an impossibility. What is, cannot be denied. Dwelling in the infinite divine consciousness of present right activity, man is ever safely intrenched from any suppositional destruction. Spiritual consciousness is his eternal heritage and fortress, absolutely impregnable against any enemy.

As Mrs. Eddy says on page 2 of "Pulpit and Press," "The enemy we confront would overthrow this sublime fortress, and it behooves us to defend our heritage." Even so, there is nothing to fear. Unlike the Mycetes of Marlowe's "Tamburlaine," hiding his crown in a "simple hole," we need to

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defend our heritage through the fearless maintenance of man's identity. "How can we do this Christianly scientific work?" Mrs. Eddy continues, and straightway declares, "By intrenching ourselves in the knowledge that our true temple is no human fabrication, but the superstructure of Truth, reared on the foundation of Love, and pinnacled in Life." The one infinite consciousness which is God, Truth, Love, Life, is forever conscious of its indestructible idea, man. Man's whole spiritual identity as idea is completely defended by this consciousness from any demolition, injury, or disturbance.

Spiritual intrenchment, however, is aggressive as well as defensive. The word trench means a cutting, and one purpose of intrenchment is a constant advance or cutting through the opposing lines. Metaphysically, the reliance upon Principle means a constant cutting through any suppositional resistance. The sleep-loving world often marvels at the progress of the Christian Scientist, fearlessly accomplishing what had seemed impossibilities, and even opposes the very trenchancy which is for the blessing of all mankind. As Mrs. Eddy says on page 160 of "The First Church of Christ, Scientist, and Miscellany": "Most of us willingly accept dead truisms which can be buried at will; but a live truth, even though it be a sapling within rich soil and with blossoms on its branches, frightens people. The trenchant truth that cuts its way through iron and sod, most men avoid until compelled to glance at it. Then they open their hearts to it for actual being, health, holiness, and immortality."

In proportion as we accept the consciousness which is deathless and unfolding Life as the only real consciousness and refuse to admit that the true self could even be conscious of anything but vigorous harmony, we are really intrenched in Spirit. Depending thus upon what is all there is, we necessarily reduce to its native nothingness what is not and never has been a real entity. This stanch recognition that more than infinite good is a supposititious impossibility cuts its way through that preposterousness as irresistibly as light cuts its way through darkness. And just as the streaming light is forever defended from any attacks of darkness, so the realization of Principle is forever defended from what has no Principle. That is why disease, injury, any condition of inaction or overaction, death itself, are all powerless against one's unremittingly active understanding of spiritual consciousness.

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Unfolding mental activity in accordance with the divine Mind is the very essence of spiritual intrenchment and trenchancy. Since the divine Mind manifest is actually infinite and there cannot be more than one infinity, the activity of the divine Mind is the one incisiveness before which every illusion of mere earthliness must vanish. Man emanates from God to do, and the doing of Mind penetrates perfectly every dream of ineffectiveness. The great First Cause keeps His expression perpetually going. It is with the utmost joy, therefore, that, fully intrenched in the secret place of the Most High, a man meets such a demand as that phrased by Clough, the poet,

Go with the spiritual life, the higher volition and action,
With the great girdle of God, go and encompass the earth.

Gustavus Paine.